On Nov. 25, 1963, Harry L. Power registered at the Terre Haute House hotel, 7th & Wabash in Terre Haute, Indiana. He gave his address as 127 N. University Ave., San Antonio, Tex. He was given Room 705, and paid $5.00 for one night (12). He carried no luggage, but had something with him wrapped in newspaper (18).

Also on Nov. 25, Power bought a ticket to St. Louis at the Terre Haute bus terminal (14). This probably occurred after he registered at the Terre Haute House, since he made a phone call to the bus terminal from the hotel (13). When it was announced, at 5:45 PM, that the St. Louis bus was ready to leave, Power got up and ran out of the bus terminal and down the alley (14).

On Nov. 26, Power made a phone call from the hotel to Poff's Gun Shop in Terre Haute (13). He offered to sell a rifle, and when he couldn't get the price he thought it was worth, he unsuccessfully tried to purchase ammunition for it (14). Shortly after noon on Nov. 26, Power checked out of the hotel without his package (4). Before doing this, he may have tried, unsuccessfully, to buy ammunition at the American Sports Building in Terre Haute (14).

After Power checked out, a maid entered Room 705 and found a 7.65 MM German Mauser rifle torn apart lying across the arms of a chair. She reported this to the management, and the Terre Haute Police Department was called. Chief of Detectives John O'Leary assigned Detectives Schoffstall and Eaton to investigate. They went to the hotel, and talked to Mr. Van Allen, the hotel manager. They also had the room checked for fingerprints (14). The rifle had been wiped clean of prints before it was discarded (3), and no other prints were found (14). The rifle's serial number was found to be U8686 (14).

The detectives obtained the following description of Power: fair complected, stocky build, sandy or light brown hair combed straight back, 22-23 years old, 5'6" tall, white male, neatly dressed in a dark blue suit. The F.B.I. was notified, and Special Agent Ken Phelps was assigned to investigate. The detectives also checked out Power's calls to the bus terminal and Poff's Gun Shop (14).

At 3:00 PM, Nov. 27, the detectives sent a radio message to the San Antonio Police Department, asking for a "character and wanted check" on Power. No age or description was given. At 10:34 PM, Nov. 28, a negative reply was received from the San Antonio Police Department (5).

On Nov. 29, the detectives sent a letter to the Chief of Police in San Antonio, asking for a complete character check on Power. His description was given, and his San Antonio address was repeated. In San Antonio, the letter was stamped to indicate that police files showed nothing on Power (6).

On Dec. 7, no reply having been received to the detectives' letter, Captain Eugene V. Butts of the Terre Haute Detective Bureau wrote to an old acquaintance of his, Inspector Emil E. Peters of the San Antonio Police Department, asking for more information on Power (7).

In his letter, Captain Butts explained that Power left "a high powered rifle the cal. that was used to shoot Presi-Kennedy with." Butts also mentioned: "We also wish to check this guy out as we have also had a local official theatened (sic) and he may be involved as the rifle was found on the seventh floor of a hotel accross (sic) the stree (sic) from the Democate (sic) and Republican headquarters this city." (7) While it is not clear from the letter when this threat against a local official was made, a political rally was held in the vicinity of the Terre Haute House the night Power stayed there (18). Assuming the threat was made that night, it is interesting to note that on the morning of Nov. 26, security was increased on Matthew E. Welsh, Governor of Indiana. These measures included the assigning of a State Police sergeant in plain clothes to accompany the Governor, the stationing of a State Policeman 24-hours-a-day at the governor's mansion, and the locking of a second door to the governor's office (1). In addition, the governor's State Policeman chauffeur was ordered to stick closer to the Governor than ever before (2).

On Dec. 10, Inspector Peters wrote to Captain Butts, attaching to his letter the report of San Antonio Detective T. T. Fenley, who investigated Power in San Antonio (9). Fenley had been assigned to the case on Dec. 9, and had conducted his inquiry on Dec. 9-10. He found that 127 University Ave., San Antonio, was occupied by Mrs. W. W. Gamblin, who said she had lived at that address for 50 years, did not rent to anyone, and did not know Power. Fenley next called Worth Seeman, Director of Records of the Texas Public Safety Department. Seeman reported that Power had tried to obtain a Texas driver's license in July 1962 but had failed the test and not tried again. Seeman said Power was 5'10" tall, weighed 180 lbs., was born on April 5, 1943, had a valid Iowa driver's license, was a painter by trade, and worked at Acme Neon Co., 1301 W. Hilderbrand, San Antonio. Fenley learned from the credit bureau that Power gave 108 University as his address and had many bad debts on his record (8).

Fenley next talked to Don McNay, owner of the Acme Neon Co. McNay said Power left the company on Sept. 12, 1962, and was "a smart aleck type person and a trouble maker" and left town owing a lot of bills. McNay said one of his former employees, Roger Dresch, had told him Power carried a membership card in the Young Communist League. McNay said he last heard from Power when he wrote for his W2 forms from "Gen. Del. Taftberry, Manila W.Va." (8) (Manila is a town, population 100, in Boone County, W.Va.)

Fenley called F.B.I. S.A.C. J. Myer Cole, and gave him the information on Power, and Cole said he'd have Special Agent Mark Childs get in touch with Fenley (8).

On Dec. 10, Fenley talked to Mrs. H. J. Moore, of Apt. 2, 108 University. She said no one named Power had lived there in the nine months she had lived there. Fenley next talked to Roger Dresch at his place of employment, Rollins Outdoor Advertising Co., 2323 Broadway, San Antonio. Dresch said "Power was

a odd sort of person. That he had a warped out look on life. That he felt the world owed him a living and that there was nothing wrong with Communist's. He spoke free about Communists and about our type of Government. He dont (sic) remember Power saying anything about doing any harm to any Offical (sic). His out look was to go back to W. Va and take his rifle and go into the hills and stay there for the rest of his life. HE WAS A TOP MARKSMAN going to the rifle range at least 2 or 3 times a week. The only other person that he knows he ran with is a boy named Charlie and that Charlie is Big and Fat and works for a garage some where around Five Points. The card that he carried was cream colored with dark blue or black letters." (8)

Fenley talked, finally, to Jack Cole, owner of the apartment house at 108 University, San Antonio. Cole said he didn't know much about Power, except "that he was married to a woman in the Air Force and that he was an Ex Army man and that they seemed to have a lot of family trouble and that he moved out around Sept. of last year and he has not heard from him since." (8) Fenley's report was then attached to Inspector Peters' letter to Captain Butts of the Terre Haute Police Department (9).

On Apr. 7, 1964, Detectives Schoffstall and Eaton wrote their "offense report," and it was signed by Chief of Detectives O'Leary (14). On Apr. 9, 1964, Chief of Police Frank Riddle of the Terre Haute Police Department wrote to Earl Warren. He wrote:

> Enclosed find case records from my department concerning an indident in our city which may interest your Commission regarding investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy and/or attempt on the life of General Walker.
>
> You will note by the reports that there is a rifle involved in this investigation. This wapon is in the possession of the Terre Haute Police Department at this time and is available to your Commission at any time.

Riddle attached to this letter copies of all pertinent reports, documents, and correspondance (15).

Norman Redlich, of the Warren Commission staff, received Riddle's letter, and passed it on to Howard P. Willens and J. Lee Rankin with the note: "My recommendation is that we acknowledge and take no further action. If bomth of you agree, please return and I'll write the letter." (16) The following letter, dated April 24, 1964, and signed by Rankin, was sent to Riddle:

> Chief Justice Warren has asked me to reply to your letter of April 19, 1964 (sic), which was accompanied by records from your department concerning an incident involving a rifle occurring shortly after the assassination of President Kennedy.
>
> We do not feel that there is any need for the Commission to examine this rifle at this time, but we thank you for your cooperation in calling this matter to our attention. (17)

References:

(1) "Johnson Is Welsh's '64 Choice," The Indianapolis News, November 26, 1963, p. 26.

(2) "Indiana Tightens Security," The New York Times, November 27, 1963, p. 17.

(3) "Reveals Finding of Rifle; Former Chief Still Wonders," The Terre Haute Tribune-Star, April 2, 1967, p. 28.

(4) "Rifle Similar to Lee Oswald's Found in Hotel," The Dallas Times-Herald, April 3, 1967.

(5) Radio traffic record, Terre Haute Police Department, Nov. 27, 1963.

(6) Letter from Detectives Schoffstall and Eaton, Terre Haute Police Department, to Chief of Police, San Antonio, Tex., Nov. 29, 1963.

(7) Letter from Captain Eugene V. Butts, Terre Haute Police Department, to Inspector Emil E. Peters, San Antonio Police Department, Dec. 7, 1963.

(8) Assignment report of Detective T. T. Fenley, San Antonio Police Department, Dec. 9, 1963.

(9) Letter from Inspector Emil E. Peters, San Antonio Police Department, to Captain Eugene V. Butts, Terre Haute Police Department, Dec. 10, 1963.

(10) Letter from Clarence B. Everly, Terre Haute Police Department, to the National Rifle Association, Dec. 5, 1963.

(11) Letter from Walter J. Howe, National Rifle Association, to Clarence B. Everly, Terre Haute Police Department, Dec. 12, 1963.

(12) Registration card, Terre Haute House, Nov. 25, 1963.

(13) Records of local calls, Room 705, Terre Haute House, November 25-26, 1963.

(14) Offense report of Detectives Schoffstall and Eaton, Terre Haute Police Department, April 7, 1964.

(15) Letter from Chief of Police Frank Hiddle, Terre Haute Police Department, to Earl Warren, April 9, 1964.

(16) Routing slip from Norman Redlich to Howard P. Willens and J. Lee Rankin, April 21, 1964.

(17) Letter from J. Lee Rankin to Frank Hiddle, April 24, 1964.

References (continued):

(18) Interview of Frank Riddle by Larry Haapanen, Putnamville, Ind., July 9, 1970.

(19) Interview of Mr. Van Allen (manger of the Terre Haute House), by Larry Haapanen, Terre Haute, Ind., Aug. 31, 1970.

(20) Interview of Lawrence Sawyer (editor of the Terre Haute Star), by Larry Haapanen, Terre-Haute, Ind., July 7, 1970.